

A history and survey of Haroldston House and gardens, Pembrokeshire: an unexcavated manorial complex

By ROGER TURVEY¹

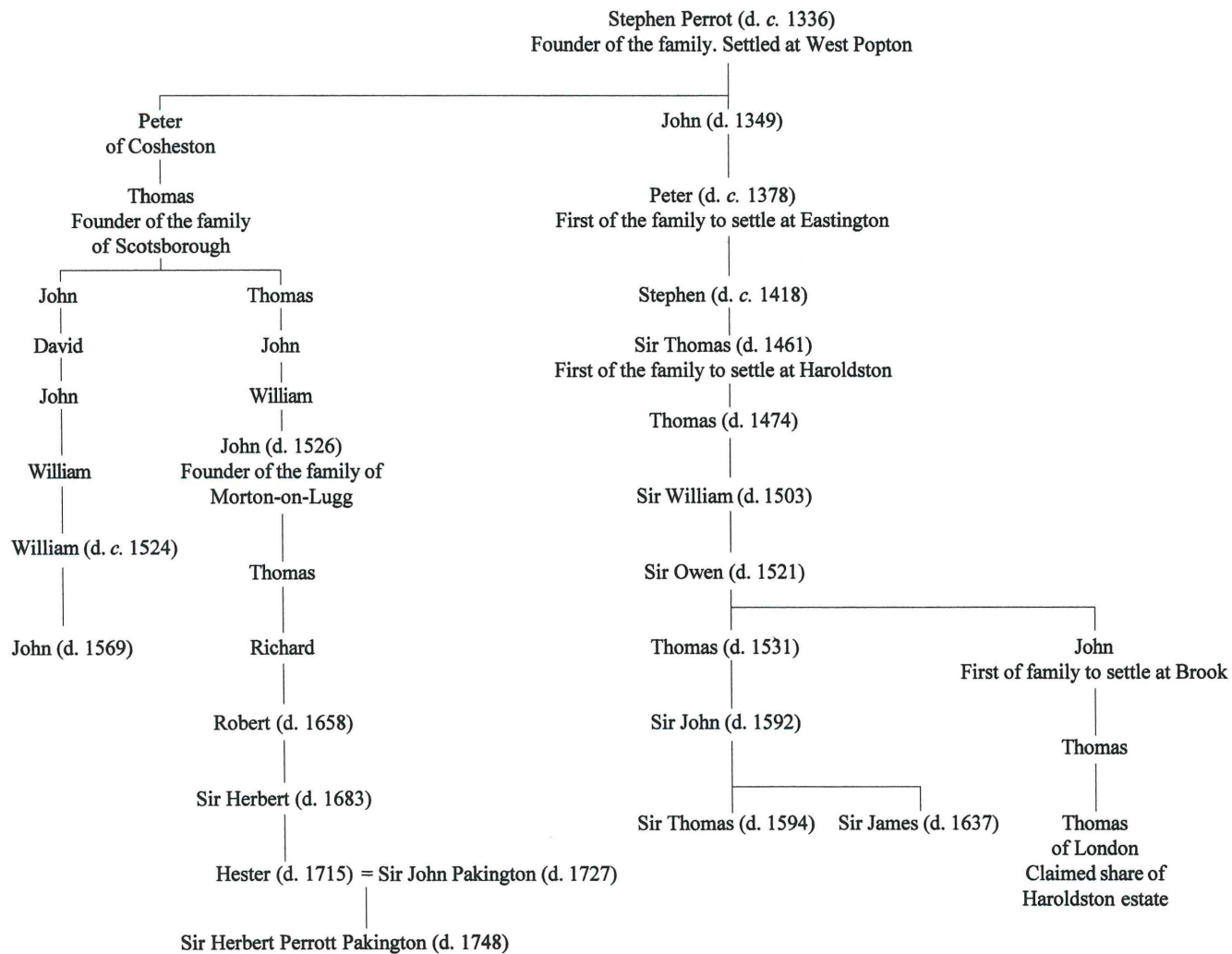
INTRODUCTION

Haroldston housed one of the most powerful and influential families in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Pembrokeshire, the Perrots. It served them well as a home and as the nerve centre of wide estates covering the greater part of Pembrokeshire for over two hundred and fifty years. More significantly perhaps, it provided them with a convenient base from which they could intrude into the affairs of the richest and most important urban centre in south-west Wales, Haverfordwest. Unfortunately, when wealth and opportunity afforded itself this same family all but abandoned the house in favour of grander residences elsewhere such as at Carew and Laugharne Castles and, further afield, York House (the London home of the archbishops of York) which they leased from the Crown during the 1580s and 90s. This is not to suggest that Haroldston House was ever unimportant but it never received the kind of familial care and financial investment that occasionally results in the survival of a building long after it has outlived its usefulness. Consequently, gone are the graceful lines of its masonry, its high flung gables and decorative windows, much of which have disappeared either through collapse and plunder or under a cloying cloak of ivy. Dilapidated it might be but forgotten it is not, and the pride and affection felt for it by the people of the town and borough of Haverfordwest, as represented by the Gild of Freemen to whom it belongs, is palpable.²

Haroldston House is located approximately one mile south of Haverfordwest town centre and less than a mile from the ruins of the Augustinian priory of St Thomas the Martyr. Situated in the parish of Haroldston St Issels, a mile distant of its church, the house and gardens cover an area of over five acres. This is a little less than in its heyday because the site at Haroldston has been cut through at its northern tip by the railway and at its southern end by Clay Lane. Haroldston consists of a ruinous complex of late medieval, Tudor and possibly Stuart buildings, some with stone vaulted undercrofts. The most prominent feature is the so-called Steward's Tower, originally a gatehouse that was subsequently refurbished as a small tower house. Until its collapse, sometime after 1925, the tallest surviving structure was a chimney the size of which, though not uncommon in Pembrokeshire, might suggest a kitchen range that may have been a later addition to the original house. Surrounding the buildings are the remains of courtyards, walled gardens, terraces, earthworks and water features belonging to a very extensive and well preserved, if as yet unexcavated, series of formal gardens probably unaltered, certainly unploughed, since the mid to late seventeenth century. Together, the house and garden remains are an important survival of a Tudor manorial complex of which there are few comparative examples surviving in south-west Wales. It is the writer's earnest hope and desire to see the site properly excavated and securely preserved for the future.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE

Haroldston House was built by and is named after the Harold family. The earliest reference to a member of the family is *c.* 1241–44, when a certain Richard Harold of Haroldston West appeared among a number of witnesses to Earl Walter Marshall's charter to Monkton Priory.³ Half a century later the family



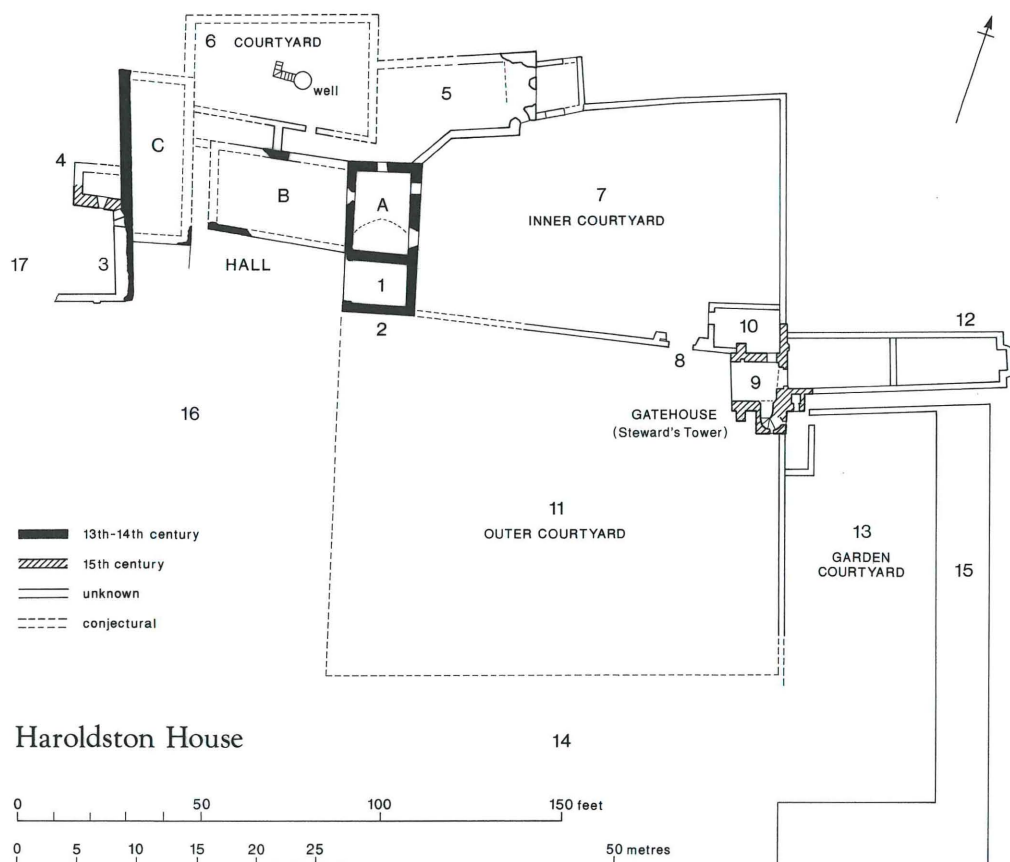


Fig. 1. Ground plan of Haroldston House, based on a plan supplied by RCAHMW, amended by the author.

had evidently re-located to the parish of Haroldston St Issels, the first mention of which is recorded in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291, when Richard Harold, possibly the son of the aforementioned Richard, was granted land there in 1295 by his kinsman Ralph Castlemartin.⁴ That the earliest recorded masonry on the site has been tentatively dated to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, suggests that the house was begun by this Richard Harold and was continued by his son William.⁵ By 1324 the house and its manor was well established being held as a knight's fee of the lordship of Haverford and assessed at 20 marks annually (£13 6s 8d).⁶

Members of the Harold family continued to reside at Haroldston for a further century until the death in 1442 of Joanna, daughter and sole heiress of William Harold.⁷ During her lifetime the house had been occupied and cared for by her uncle and guardian John Harold, dean of Hereford Cathedral, and, after she came of age, by her respective husbands David Joce (dead before 1410) and Thomas Sturmy.⁸ In spite of her two marriages, Joanna Harold (she was probably in her eighties when she passed away) died without heirs so that the house reverted to her nearest surviving relative, Thomas Perrot of Eastington.⁹ By virtue of his grandfather Peter's marriage to Joanna's aunt Alice, daughter of Sir Richard Harold (d. c. 1345), Sir Thomas Perrot became the sole beneficiary of a substantial estate and a mansion house

ESTATE OF HAROLDSTON, ST ISSELS.

FOR SALE BY AUCTION, 1857.

LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

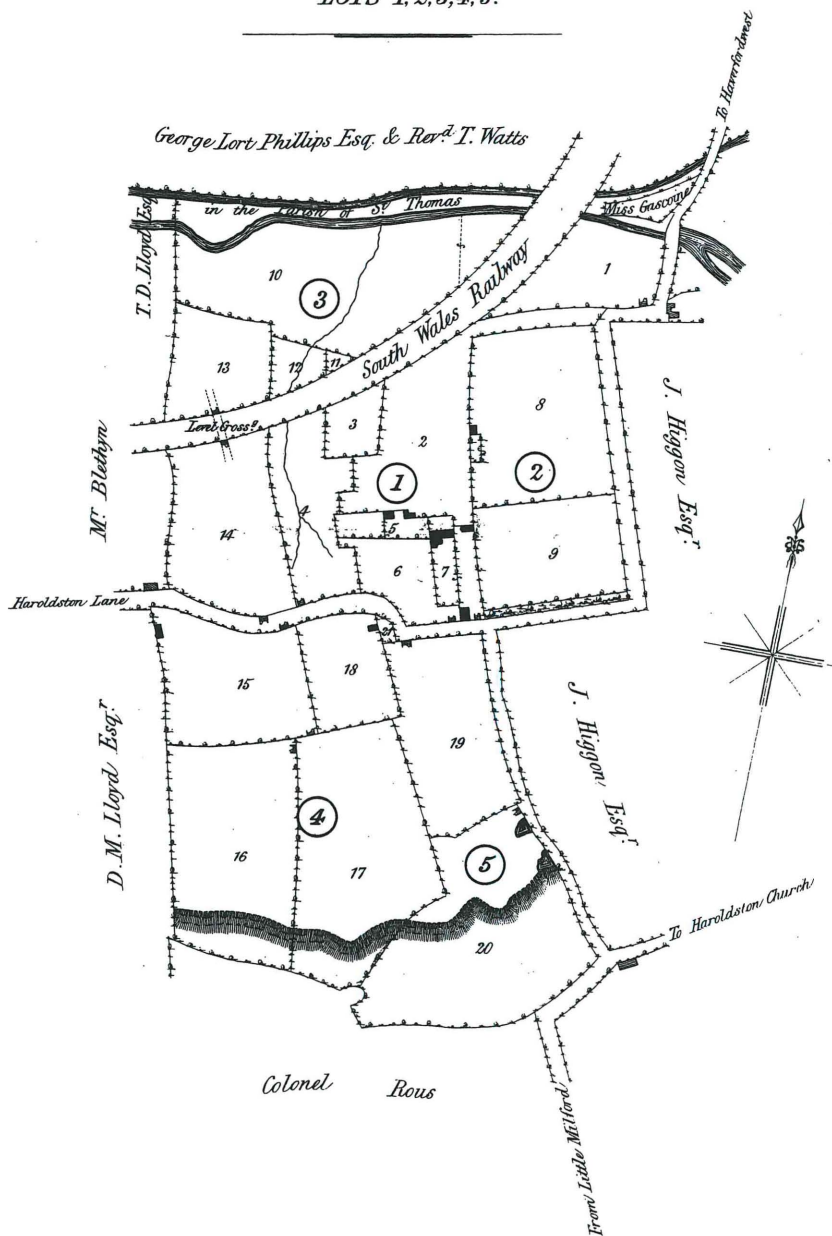


Fig. 2. Plan of the estate of Haroldston St Issels (1857).
Reproduced by kind permission of the Pembrokeshire Record Office, Haverfordwest.

considerably larger than his own principal residence at Eastington.¹⁰ After 1442, the Perrots made Haroldston their home and members of the family continued to reside there until the early 1680s.¹¹

Besides being a fine estate, Haroldston was valuable because of its close proximity to Haverfordwest. By the mid fifteenth century Haverfordwest had not only overtaken Pembroke in size, wealth and importance to become the principal trade and mercantile centre in Pembrokeshire, it was also among the largest and most populous towns in Wales. Haroldston enabled the Perrots to involve themselves in the affairs of a borough that jealously guarded its rights and privileges and which emphasised at every opportunity its exclusivity. The town's ambition for status and recognition as an entity separate from the lordship and county in which it was situated was realised in 1479 when it was granted a charter by Edward IV.¹² As a result of this royal charter Haverfordwest earned the peculiar status of being a town and county in itself, a unique privilege it enjoyed until disenfranchised in 1885. Although Haroldston lay on the fringe of the county borough, its owners worked hard to inveigle themselves into the burghal community, a feat they had achieved by the mid 1490s if not before.¹³ In 1496 Sir William Perrot served as the county borough's sheriff while his son, Sir Owen, succeeded in obtaining a twenty-one year lease of the town's mills in 1516.¹⁴ The umbilical nature of the relationship that had developed between Haroldston and Haverfordwest was sealed in 1554 with the passing of a clause exempting the house's owners from a long-standing ordinance forbidding 'foreigners' from enjoying the privileges of burghal membership.¹⁵

Other than to suggest the likelihood of additional building, such as the so-called Steward's Tower sometime during the last quarter of the fifteenth century, and some landscaping, little is known of the history of the house itself during the period of its occupation by the Perrots. The one who took the keenest interest in the house was the most famous Perrot of them all, namely Sir John. There is no reason to doubt the tradition that he was born there, sometime between 7 and 11 November 1528, and that he was baptized in the local parish church.¹⁶ Certainly, his great-great-grandfather, Thomas, had gone to considerable trouble and expense in a court of law to secure the family's rights over the parish church.¹⁷ His adversary, the prior of Haverfordwest Priory, to whose religious order the advowson of the church had been entrusted, was no match for the wily Perrot who proceeded to bully the monks into submission. Within half a century, if not earlier, the monks had succumbed to Perrot pressure by agreeing to the appointment of Sir Owen as steward of the priory's estates.¹⁸ The fact that the monastic estate bordered Haroldston was used to full advantage by the Perrots, who intended to increase the size of their own property by persuading the monks to part with their valuable acres. In return, the monks received the protection of, arguably, the most powerful family in Pembrokeshire from other equally predatory gentry. The relationship between gentle patron and submissive monk had repaired itself sufficiently for the religious order to accept for burial within its walls of at least four generations of the Perrot family.¹⁹ Sir John's father Thomas was the last to be buried there before the house was dissolved by Henry VIII during the Reformation.²⁰

Having lost his father a little before his third birthday, Sir John's mother, Mary Berkeley, remarried and it was under the care of his Welsh-speaking step-father, Sir Thomas Jones, that the young Perrot heir was brought up at Haroldston.²¹ Sometime during his teens he left the family home for school at St David's from which he proceeded, aged eighteen, to London to complete his education in the household of Sir William Paulet, the Lord High Treasurer of England. In February 1550, less than three months after attaining his majority, Haroldston, valued at £20 annually, was delivered to Sir John Perrot by his step-father who vacated the house after nearly seventeen years of occupation.²² As his step-father, and mother, moved back to the Jones estate of Abermarlais in Carmarthenshire, Perrot settled into his new home which he proceeded to refurbish with stone plundered from the nearby priory. If the oft-quoted tradition of his taking the dressed stone from the priory, which he acquired in 1563 by exchange of

property with John Barlow of Slebech, is to be believed, and there is no reason to dispute it, none has thus far been recovered from the Haroldston site.²³ It was here, to the home of his childhood, that he brought his bride, Anne Cheyney, and where, in all likelihood, she bore his first-born son, Thomas. Tragically, she died either in childbirth or very soon after. It was also to Haroldston that Sir John invited Protestant heretics on the run from the Marian authorities to shelter there before taking ship to the continent. Prominent among those harboured at Haroldston between 1554 and 1556 were his uncle, Rice or Rhys Perrot, former reader in Greek to the late king Edward VI, and Laurence Nowell, a noted scholar and teacher who joined his brother Alexander, dean of St Paul's, in exile in Germany sometime in 1554.²⁴

Unlike his forebears, Sir John was a man of national interests and concerns, attending Court and Parliament in London, serving as Lord President of Munster (1571–73) and then Lord Deputy of Ireland (1584–88), before becoming a member of the Queen's Privy Council (1589–90), all of which conspired to draw him away from Haroldston. In 1555 he was granted Carew Castle by Queen Mary, which he later made his home, and to which was added Laugharne Castle by grant of Queen Elizabeth in 1575.²⁵ His new homes notwithstanding, Sir John continued to use Haroldston on a regular basis particularly when borough affairs called him back to Haverfordwest. At some point in the 1570s, possibly in 1574 to coincide with his son's majority, Sir John entrusted the running of the house and estate to his heir, Thomas. Sir Thomas, who was certainly in possession of the house and enjoying the income derived from the manor in January 1585, seems to have had an especial affection for Haroldston, it being likely that he too, was born here in September 1553.²⁶ From the meagre evidence available, it would seem that he was the one most responsible for establishing the resplendent gardens that once so richly adorned the house. Their magnificence were such as to attract the attention of the Pembrokeshire antiquary George Owen of Henllys who makes mention of 'a pleasant grove of his [Sir Thomas] owne planting adjoining to his house of Haroldstone'.²⁷ According to Owen, Sir Thomas Perrot was the man responsible for introducing the pheasant 'about sixteen yeares past' (1587), and which in his 'memory there were none bredd within the shire'.²⁸ Having 'procured certen cockes and hens to be transported out of Ireland', no doubt with the assistance of his father, the Lord Deputy, 'purposing to endemise in a grove . . . gave them libertie therein' so that they spread across the county.²⁹

His twenty-year tenure (1574–94) may be considered the high point of the house and gardens though his successor, his half-brother Sir James Perrot, must take some credit for maintaining, if not enhancing, the Haroldston mansion and estate. The structural additions to the house and courtyards that have been dated to the seventeenth century may, in view of his forty-year tenure of the property (1597–1637), be tentatively ascribed to Sir James. Ironically, his possession of the house did not come easily and very nearly slipped through his grasp. After the attainder and death of Sir John Perrot in 1592, Haroldston, valued at £22 6s 3d annually, along with all the Perrot properties, was declared forfeit to the Crown. The family's hereditary estates were soon returned by Queen Elizabeth who bore no malice towards Sir John's son and heir, Sir Thomas. However, he died within eighteen months of his father's death, in February 1594, and with no son to succeed him the estates became subject to complex and long drawn-out litigation.³⁰ During this period, between being vacated in the spring of 1594 and its lease by the Crown in April 1597, the empty mansion house may have fallen prey to opportunists who set about robbing it of its lead. This might explain why William Walter, mercer, and chamber reeve of Haverfordwest, was commanded in September 1596 to answer for the carriage of 'lead had out of Harroldston' to the value of £1 7s 11d.³¹ Had the dispute over Haroldston's ownership not been settled as soon as it was, it is doubtful if the house could have endured much longer its criminal neglect at the hands of uncaring royal officials.

The outcome of the litigation between Sir James Perrot and his cousin, Thomas Perrot of London, on



Fig. 3. Aerial photograph of Haroldston House taken from the direction of Merlin's Brook. The gardens can be made out in the foreground with the house located between the railway line and the road. The sunken road is on the left. *Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.*

the one part, and Dorothy and Penelope her daughter, widow and heiress respectively of Sir Thomas Perrot, on the other, hinged on the legality of a devise drawn up by Sir John Perrot in May 1584, confirmed in a revised settlement in 1590, to settle his estates in the event of his death.³² According to the devise, Sir John Perrot had intended that his estates should descend to those of his own blood and name, or at least 'to such of his name as he liketh and careth for'.³³ First on the list of heirs was Sir John's

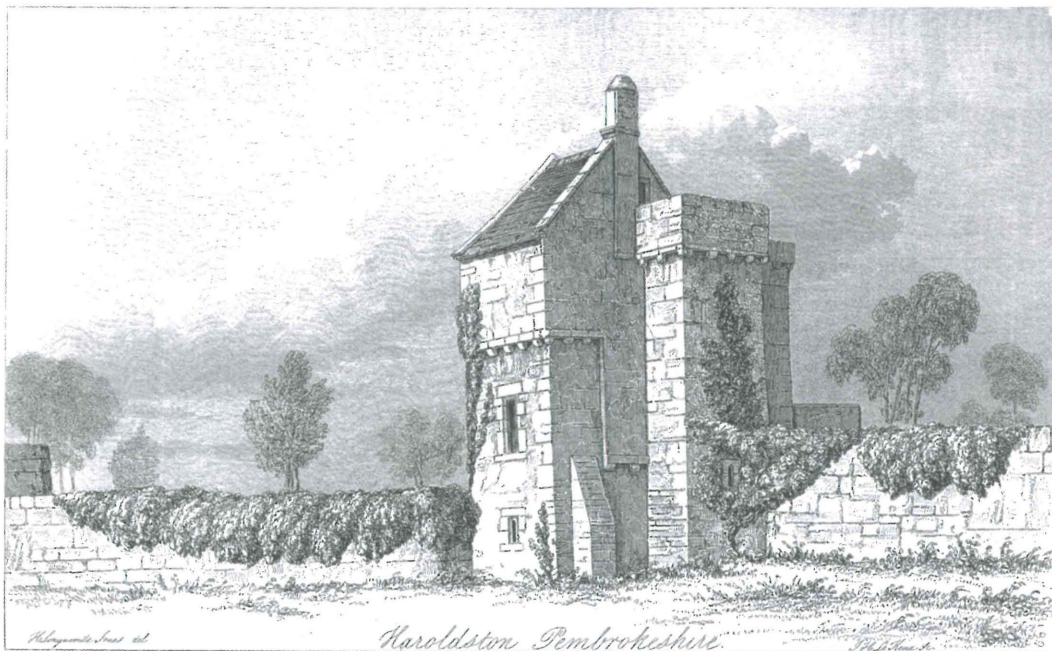


Fig. 4. The medieval gatehouse or Steward's Tower as drawn in 1860.

Reproduced from Archaeologia Cambrensis 1860.

eldest son, Sir Thomas, but if he was to die without male heirs, the properties were to descend to the next person named, and in succession thereafter, namely, William, born of a second marriage, Sir James, the product of an extra-marital affair, and Thomas Perrot of the Brook, his first cousin. The survival of an heiress, and Sir Thomas Perrot's desire to see her succeed to his estates, coupled with the dower rights of his widow and his father's attainder, muddled the legal waters. Consequently, for some fifteen years after the death of Sir Thomas Perrot, his widow and daughter (during which time both had married, respectively, Henry Percy, 9th earl of Northumberland and Sir William Lower of St Winnow, Cornwall), were involved in a desperate struggle to persuade the Crown to release to them forfeited Perrot properties. At the same time, they had to defend themselves against the claims of Sir John's illegitimate son, Sir James, who did all he could to invoke his late father's devise. Helped in part by the qualified support of Robert Devereux, 2nd earl of Essex (being the brother of Dorothy Percy placed him in a difficult position), Sir James succeeded in recovering a healthy share of the Perrots' Pembrokeshire properties — of which Haroldston was the jewel.

In the event, the disputing parties came to an accommodation sanctioned by the Crown, whereby Sir James Perrot recovered Haroldston while his half-brother's widow and daughter were compensated with a substantial cash sum.³⁴ That the Crown favoured Sir James was early signalled by its willingness to lease him Haroldston pending the outcome of the case. Consequently, on 23 April 1597 the mansion house was delivered to his agent and friend Nicholas Adams (d. 1628), from whom it was ordered that 'bonds be taken for the repair and maintenance thereof' made necessary because 'the house of Haroldston was one of the houses of residence of Sir John Perrott'.³⁵ Six weeks later, on 11 June, Adams conveyed Haroldston to Sir James who doubtless set about its repair while preparing for election to Parliament as member for Haverfordwest in September 1597.³⁶ Adams' conveyance to Perrot was



Fig. 5. The Steward's Tower, viewed from the south-west corner of the outer courtyard (11).
The wall of the upper floor has since collapsed. *Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.*

ratified by Letters Patent of the Crown on 21 September 1599, when it issued a formal grant of the mansion house and estate to the latter.³⁷ Sir James continued to live at Haroldston for the remainder of his life, until his childless death in February 1637. His widow, Mary, lived there until her own death in May 1639, after which it passed to Sir James's nominated heir, Sir Herbert Perrot of Morton-on-Lugg, a distant cousin from Herefordshire.³⁸

Although Sir Herbert regularly divided his time between Haroldston and his Herefordshire manors of Wellington and Morton, he seems not to have made Pembrokeshire his permanent home until after the Restoration in 1660. Fortunately, Haroldston was not neglected, being tenanted to members of Sir Herbert's own family who took up residence in and diligently cared for the house. The first to do so was Sir Herbert's younger brother James, who lived there from about 1640 until the early 1650s, followed by his brother Francis (d. 1668) during the later 1650s.³⁹ Another of the family who evidently found Haroldston a congenial place to live was its youngest member, Damaris, who joined her brother James there sometime during the late 1640s, probably in the aftermath of the Civil War. Her stay at Haroldston was not unfruitful, finding a husband in Owen Edwards of Treffgarne, or indeed uneventful, being witness to an abduction on 7 June 1649 at Haroldston bridge of her friend's fourteen-year-old daughter who was later that same day forced into a clandestine marriage.⁴⁰ As far as can be determined the apparently unmarried James Perrot was entrusted with the responsibility of running his brother's scattered Pembrokeshire estates, a task he probably continued until his death sometime between 1678 and 1682.⁴¹ It was during his tenancy of the property that Haroldston was garrisoned during the Civil War by Royalist troops, a move not unwelcomed by James and Sir Herbert, both of whom sided with the king, signed the loyalty declaration (in which document they are both described as of Haroldston) and contributed to the formation of the Royalist Association in the autumn of 1642.⁴²

Haroldston saw no action during the war and when in 1644 the conflict threatened to make its way to



Fig. 6. The Steward's Tower, side view from the outer courtyard (11). *Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.*

the mansion's doorstep, the house was hurriedly vacated in the face of approaching Parliamentary soldiers under the command of Rowland Laugharne. Consequently, no significant war damage was inflicted on the house other than might have been caused by the routine carelessness of billeted troops. Nor did the house and estate suffer in the aftermath of the war when those who had sided with the king were made to pay heavily for backing the losing side. While some of his hapless neighbours were declared Royalist delinquents and fined (£1,230 in the case of Sir John Stepney of Prendergast),⁴³ Perrot, a 'Parliamentarian by second choice and for self-interest',⁴⁴ changed sides. His siding with Parliament, sometime in the summer of 1644, saved him from crippling fines which might have saddled the Haroldston estate with debts from which it might not have recovered. Ironically, he became an active member of local Parliamentary committees set up to levy fines, assess and collect taxation and to investigate and deal with enemies past and potential, one of whom, John Poyer (d. 1649), one-time mayor of Pembroke town and zealous Parliamentarian, complained bitterly about the treatment meted out to him and his men by Perrot and his fellow commissioners. Parliament's failure to discipline Perrot, the turncoat, and his committeemen, was partly the reason behind Poyer's rebellion which resulted in his trial and execution at Covent Garden. The chameleon-like qualities which had stood Perrot in good stead during the Civil War and Interregnum were again in evidence in the first months of the Restoration when as rehabilitated Royalist, Perrot was knighted by Charles II in August 1660.⁴⁵

If at first Sir Herbert did not find Pembrokeshire a congenial place to live, he certainly took to its

women, taking to wife two from the county, namely, Sibyl, the daughter and co-heiress of a local squire, David Lloyd of Cilciffeth, and upon her death aged 40 in 1667, another, Hester, the daughter of William Barlow of Castle Pill.⁴⁶ As his brother and family made more frequent use of Haroldston after 1660, Francis vacated the property in favour of a move to Monington-on-Wye where he died eight years later. Sir Herbert's other brother, James, continued to live in Pembrokeshire and found lodgings in a town-house in Haverfordwest where he presumably died being buried, next to his namesake Sir James, in the church of St Mary's.⁴⁷ That Haroldston was a substantial house which could have accommodated them all, can be gauged by the Hearth Tax return of 1670 which stated that its owner, 'Sir Herbert Perrett', was liable for a payment on 10 hearths at 2s each. According to the late Major Francis Jones, seven was the average number of hearths in a Pembrokeshire mansion so that Haroldston stands comparison with the greater houses of the county such as Landshipping, Orielson, Picton, Stackpole Court, St Bride's and Wiston.⁴⁸ From the ruins we see today, it is perhaps a little difficult to visualize Haroldston as a house capable of accommodating ten hearths, but our task is made a little easier by the chance survival of a room-by-room inventory of goods and furniture drawn up in April 1717.⁴⁹ It is clear from the inventory that Haroldston consisted of some twelve rooms, namely, five bedrooms, described as the red, green and blue rooms together with the little room and great chamber, a 'great room', presumably the hall, a dining room, a substantial kitchen, within which was a small room, and three 'garrets' located in the 'new building'. There is also mention of store rooms which were quite possibly the vaulted basements beneath the two small halls of the earliest part of the house (see A and B on Fig. 1).

Sir Herbert very quickly developed a fondness for Pembrokeshire, acting as its sheriff in 1665–6, representing Haverfordwest in Parliament in 1677 and serving as the town's mayor in 1677–78.⁵⁰ Had he died while residing at Haroldston, his will stated that he should be buried in the parish church, an edifice he had spent good money restoring, but as fate would have it, he died at his Herefordshire home and is buried in the church of Wellington next to the altar beneath a fine monument complete with colourfully-painted Perrot heraldry. His widow, Susanna Norris (d. 1690), daughter of Sir Francis Norris of Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire, was his third wife whom he married in 1669 after the death in childbirth of his second, Hester, his partner of less than fifteen months. With Susanna's marriage to Sir Cyril Wyche in the summer of 1684, Haroldston was vacated and leased to the Member of Parliament for Pembrokeshire in 1685, William Barlow, a relation through marriage and a younger son of the Barlows of Slebech.⁵¹ This is presumably the 'gentleman, best known in this county by the name of the tall Captain Barlow' mentioned by the Pembrokeshire historian Richard Fenton as living there in his *Historical Tour Through Pembrokeshire* (1810).⁵² Sir Herbert's sole surviving child, Hester, knew Haroldston in her youth but after the death of her father in 1683 she spent the remaining years of her minority at Wellington and rarely visited her Pembrokeshire property. Nor did she intend to frequent the place on a regular basis after attaining her majority in 1689, being described in one transaction in 1694 as 'late of St. Issells'.⁵³ Indeed, in March 1691 she leased part of the mansion house together with some land attached to a wealthy local butcher, Edward Morrow of Freystrop, 'until one year after his death'.⁵⁴

With her marriage in December 1700 to Sir John Pakington, 4th Bt., Haroldston passed out of the ownership of the Perrots and soon ceased to function as a family home.⁵⁵ The Pakingtons visited Haroldston regularly between 1701 and 1706 but thereafter their annual spring visits, which lasted no more than two or three months, became less frequent and they all but ended with Hester's death in 1715.⁵⁶ The last reliable reference to her, or her family, staying at Haroldston is dated to Good Friday 1712, after which some work was done on the house, though the receipts for the regular delivery of coal for its ten hearths throughout 1716 suggests a mansion in full use.⁵⁷ Not for the first time, Haroldston was leased out, possibly even before Hester's death, when Lady Elizabeth (Betty) Rich, mother of William Edwardes, the first Baron Kensington (cr. 1776), a woman famed for the lavishness of her

entertainment, became the first of the house's many tenants.⁵⁸ According to Fenton, one of her guests was the writer and politician Joseph Addison who 'happening to pay it a visit, was entertained there with a mask, conducted with great expense and classical taste' in consequence of which he is said to have met and later married (in 1716) Charlotte Rich, the Dowager Countess of Warwick.⁵⁹

Thereafter, Haroldston, which by now would have been increasingly old fashioned and undesirable to the gentry, was leased out to all and sundry with John Gribble, a tallow chandler, and Rachell Aubrey, a widow, both from Haverfordwest, being among the first to make the place their home in 1717 on twenty-one-year leases. While Gribble was leased part of the demesne land 'together with a stable and other premises adjoining Harrelston House', Aubrey was leased 'part of the dwelling house of Harroldston' together with the lessor's 'goods and furniture'.⁶⁰ In 1719 Aubrey may have been joined at Haroldston by another lessee William Roach, a mason, who was leased 'the house and garden'.⁶¹ Although these were clearly persons of financial means, they were short on quality, and it may be suggested that the house began to decline during their tenancy. As far as is known, the house was left untenanted after the expiry of the leases, the last of which, if it went to full term, ended in 1740. In any event, the whole estate was mortgaged early in 1749 for the sum of £6,000 for the sole purpose of providing portions for the younger members of the Pakington family.⁶² It is significant that in all landed transactions respecting their Pembrokeshire properties dated after 1717, no member of the Pakington family is described as being of Haroldston but of Westwood, their family seat in Worcestershire, which suggests that the house was left unoccupied for over twenty years before it was finally sold in May 1763.

Unfortunately for the family, the more so for Haroldston, rising debt, caused in large part by Hester's son, Sir Herbert Perrott Pakington's extravagant lifestyle and poor business sense, forced them to sell the property in 1763 to Sir John Philipps, 6th Bt., of Picton Castle. The deed of sale suggests a house



Fig. 7. Chimney serving the ground-floor kitchen, which has collapsed since the photograph was taken, looking south from the garden. The remains of the Steward's Tower can be seen in the background to the left. *Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.*

long neglected but not beyond repair, but the will to effect the necessary work was not forthcoming and the new owners were said by a visitor in 1767, to have ‘pulled down all the materials which were saleable’ so that the house is ‘now in ruins’.⁶³ An estate map commissioned in 1774 by Sir Richard Philipps, 7th Bt., describes ‘the ruins of Haroldston House with the Court and gardens’, but the latter too had fallen into neglect being much overgrown.⁶⁴ According to the Picton Castle Terrier, the Haroldston estate, as purchased in 1763 and leased to John Lloyd esquire, amounted to some 138 acres, two acres of which was occupied by the mansion house and gardens, the rest being retained by the Pakington family. Although the house had long been neglected, the loss of the greater part of the Haroldston estate deeply affected the Pakingtons, but economic reality rather than sentimental attachment dictated their actions as the following extract from their official history, co-written by the recently deceased head of the family, Richard Pakington, 6th Baron Hampton, testifies:

The Haroldston estate, which once loomed so large in the family papers, makes one appearance in the letters of this period. Accounts rendered in 1768 shew that one year’s profit on the Freystrop colliery came to £413, while the rest of the estate, when all disbursements had been made, produced no more than thirty pounds.⁶⁵

With its lead, slate and other salvageable materials pillaged for sale or use elsewhere, Haroldston House rapidly declined. By 1810 it was so ruinous that on visiting the property Richard Fenton was confronted by ‘a large and most incoherent aggregate of buildings of different ages, and incapable of being traced to any regular plan’.⁶⁶ In 1834 the well-known publisher of topographical dictionaries, Samuel Lewis, confirmed Fenton’s earlier observations stating that ‘the ancient mansion is now in a very dilapidated condition’.⁶⁷ One part only of the mansion continued to be occupied until at least the third quarter of the nineteenth century,⁶⁸ the Steward’s Tower, but this too has succumbed to the elements, and not a little vandalism, with the result that the house is in very real danger of disappearing altogether. Happily this is not yet the case and there is still time to protect and conserve what remains.

THE HOUSE AND GARDENS

The earliest part of the house is thought to date from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century and consisted originally of a first-floor hall range of stone construction which was typical of many of the homes of the gentry of the period. Little now remains of the hall range above basement level so that discernible features are few. The layout of the hall range is complex but seems to have been divided into three concomitant units possibly built at different stages, hence the seemingly random arrangement. The most complete part of the hall range is that marked A on the plan. This hall measures 43 feet by 20 feet and has a pointed arch vaulted undercroft. At its south end the hall is fronted by a wall of finely-cut masonry suggesting that the main front of the hall range faced south. The termination of the wall here, with its angular splay at the base, suggests a formal staircased entrance to the whole range (1). The finely-cut masonry wall survives to a reasonable height enabling the remains of corbelled decoration to be traced, which may indicate the beginning either of the roof or an upper floor (2). The vaulted undercroft is open at four points and it is difficult to decide if these are original features and, if so, if they were windows or doorways as the ground level has evidently changed and the openings facing the courtyard towards the gatehouse (9) are only half-visible. The small opening on the west side of the vault may have been intended as a means of internal communication between the vault of hall A and that of hall B.



Fig. 8. Close-up view of the chimney, viewed from the courtyard (6). What looks like the remains of a second-floor hooded fireplace can be seen half-way up the structure. *Crown Copyright: RCAHMW.*

Very little survives of hall B, presumably the Great Hall, where it is assumed that the roof of the vault has collapsed, so that it is only possible to speak in general terms. The hall measures approximately 40 feet by 25 feet and due to its abutting hall A forms an L-shaped plan. Halls A and B evidently formed the core of the medieval house which may have been added to a little later by the construction of hall C. The plan and remains of hall C are quite confusing. Not only is it built to a different alignment to the rest of the hall range but its relationship to the whole is not entirely clear. It is assumed that there was some means of communication between the other rooms probably at first-floor level. The dimensions of the hall itself are not clear with its northern end being wider than its southern. Moreover, the remains of an additional extended wall that turns sharply away from the hall range adds to the confusion (3). This may indicate the existence of an additional building or of an enclosed courtyard. The small square projection on the west side of the hall (4) may have contained a newel staircase allowing access from the basement to the first floor and to any upper chambers including the roof. It is entirely possible that hall C may, in fact, have been an accommodation block that housed the bed chambers listed in the inventory of 1717.

Adjoining the hall range is a building, the irregular shape of which suggests a service capacity consisting of what may have been access corridors (5) running alongside halls A and B together with a kitchen range to which was attached a large chimney. The date of this construction is not known but it

clearly differs from the rest of the mansion house, being bonded with a different type of mortar, while the stonework is of a lime-white complexion. All that can be said with certainty is that a substantial kitchen was certainly in existence by December 1703 when it was reported by letter of William Beavans, the steward of Haroldston, to Lady Hester Pakington, that the house was 'much out of order . . . the kitching lying allmost stript, the roof besides of the house by a Hurrycane'.⁶⁹ This domestic range partly enclosed a courtyard or raised terrace (6) in which, it may be conjectured, was located Haroldston's water supply, possibly a well to which steps descended. This range would seem to belong to the seventeenth century and, given this was his principal residence, may have been the work of Sir James Perrot.

To the east of hall A lay a large walled inner courtyard (7), the entrance to which lay in its south wall (8) near to what is probably a gatehouse, known as the Steward's Tower (9), which may have been subsequently altered and rebuilt as a tower house. As originally built, this presumed gatehouse may have served as the chief entrance to the whole site, especially since it opened out onto the sunken road which ran alongside the mansion complex. Haroldston is only one of four dwellings in Pembrokeshire to be identified as having a medieval gatehouse (in fact it has two, the other being a later addition located at the head of the sunken road); the others are to be found at Johnston Hall, and at the bishop's palaces of Lamphey and St David's.⁷⁰ The Haroldston gatehouse is a small, buttressed, three storey block of coursed rubble that measures roughly 12 feet by 11 feet. At some stage during the seventeenth century its ground-floor entrance was filled in to form a vault so that it became a self-contained tower house. When it was examined by officers of the Royal Commission in 1925 the first floor room contained a hooded fireplace, since plundered, and the walls on all four sides were still intact.⁷¹ Access from the vault to the two upper floors and roof was by means of a semi-detached spiral stair-vice which also housed a garderobe. The gatehouse is thought to be medieval or early Tudor in origin, dating to perhaps the last quarter of the fifteenth century. It may be significant that a stone mason, John Dole of Pembroke, was employed by Sir William Perrot for seventy-one days work for which he was paid 34s 8d: could this be linked to the construction of the gatehouse?⁷² If so, it would place the date of construction to between 1474 and 1503, around which time it is thought the Perrot's neighbours, the Tancreds of Johnston Hall, were similarly employed in building a gatehouse, the much altered remains of which can still be seen.

Attached to the gatehouse on its northern side is a small rectangular block of uncertain date (10) that, together with the gatehouse, forms an L-shaped plan. The functions of both buildings were to serve as protective entrances to both the outer (11) and inner courtyards. At some late stage, perhaps to coincide with the reconstruction of the gatehouse, a long narrow building of unknown date and purpose (12) was added to the gatehouse, running from west to east to the edge of the sunken road.⁷³ Possibly at the same time, a large partly-walled and now featureless courtyard (13) was added to form an enclosed garden close to the house. At the southern end of the outer courtyard (11) there appear to be the remains of a small rectangular platform (14) of unknown date and purpose. Alongside the sunken road — a feature in itself intended for unimpeded views of the surrounding fields and perhaps to add to the sense of wonder as visitors approaching the house were confronted by the gardens which hitherto had been hidden from view — is a raised L-shaped revetted terrace (15), with steps at either end, giving views over the field known as the Walks, and back again into the complex. Alongside this terrace lay the later Ropewalk which a local author, John Brown of Market Street, writing sometime in the last decade of the nineteenth century, recalled in his *The History of Haverfordwest*: 'I can remember a noble avenue of old elms which stretched up to the entrance, but which in my time were used as, and called, the Ropewalk'.⁷⁴ To the west of the outer courtyard (11) is a sunken garden (16) bounded partly by low grassy terraces and by collapsed stone walls. The outer part of this garden has been cut away by Clay (formerly Haroldston) Lane. Between the outer courtyard (11) and the sunken garden (16) there is a line of ancient

lime trees which may well be remnants of a pleached hedge that completed the enclosure of the outer courtyard by linking the courtyard wall and the entrance (1/2) to hall A. To the west of the house, to the side of hall C and extending into the adjoining field known as the Little Grove, is another sunken garden (17), or it may be simply a continuation of (16) in which a boggy area may well represent a now filled water feature.

The main area of formal gardens that lay to the north and west of the house, falling away to Merlin's Brook, are long gone. All that remain of the pleasant groves described by George Owen and said to be the work of Sir Thomas Perrot 'of his own planting', are earthworks and what appear to be filled in water features. Formal gardens became popular in the sixteenth century and while his son was landscaping Haroldston, Sir John Perrot was similarly engaged at Carew Castle.⁷⁵ Unfortunately, few such gardens from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have survived anywhere in Wales. The gardens consist of a complex of earthworks bounded on the east by a low earth and gravel mound, measuring 8 feet by 3 feet, and to the west by two paddocks known as the Groves. The key feature here is a canalised stream and wall which emerges from beneath a raised platform or terrace suggesting another water feature. At some date, probably in the seventeenth century, the outer fringes of the estate were walled and another gatehouse, located between two gates abutting Haroldston Lane on the estate plan drawn up in 1857 (see Fig. 2), was added through which access to the sunken road was obtained.⁷⁶ Beyond a few fragmentary and featureless remnants little survives of this later gatehouse which appears to have been a fairly large rectangular building.

Since descriptions of the gardens at Haroldston are rare, a vivid imagination is necessary to visualise the splendour that must have delighted the visitor in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to Fenton, writing in the early nineteenth century,

this mansion, that now wears so melancholy an appearance, was the scene of great hospitality, and . . . the little vale in which it stands, now so wretchedly denuded, was then ornamented with groves, and otherwise boasted of every appendage of luxury and fashionable life.⁷⁷

The sixteenth-century historian, George Owen, states that pheasants were bred on the estate and allowed to roam free in the gardens 'wherein they partly stayed and bred there and near at hand but afterwards chose other landlords in other places'.⁷⁸ In the corner of the field known as The Walks there was a cockpit for entertainment below which, in an adjoining field, was the orchard.⁷⁹ It is interesting to note that the Winter 'Hurricane' of 1703 that 'stript' the kitchen and partly unroofed the house caused damage to the garden, in so far as it was reported that 'no less than 11 trees were blowne downe in the grove, two of them being oakes, one of them as large as will make a running beame for a mill'.⁸⁰ Clearly, here was a tree that even at the beginning of the eighteenth century was very old, which suggests that the garden was woven around already existing features. In most cases the Tudor garden was formal and geometrical, with square and rectangular plots divided and surrounded by gravel paths, raised terraces and trelliswork.⁸¹ Besides Haroldston, the remains of two large formal gardens can still be found in Pembrokeshire, namely, at Landshipping and at Henllan, near Rhoscrowther.⁸²

Like its neighbour, the priory, Haroldston has a great deal to offer the archaeologist and the historian. Indeed, it has the potential to be as unexpected and exciting a voyage of discovery as was the priory which provided the first proof of a hitherto unknown medieval garden.⁸³ Only a full programme of archaeological excavation combined with architectural interpretation and historical research is ever likely to get close to uncovering Haroldston, so that this article may be viewed, hopefully, as a useful historical introduction, subject to change, if work ever commences on the site.

NOTES

1. This paper is based on a lecture and tour of the site conducted in September 2001 as part of the European Heritage Days programme. I should like to thank the staff of the following record repositories for their advice and unfailing courtesy during the course of my research: Worcester, Haverfordwest and the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth. I also wish to record my debt to the anonymous reader who made valuable comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this article, and to the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) who granted permission for the reproduction of the photographs in Figures 3, 5–8.
2. Encouraged by the Gild of Freemen, the Friends of Haverfordwest Museum prepared *Haroldston Ruins: An Interim Report* which was published in 1976.
3. British Library (BL), Harleian MSS 1249, fo. 28.
4. *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae . . . P. Nicholai IV* (London, 1802); B. G. Charles, *Non-Celtic Place-Names in Wales* (London, 1938), 59–60; The National Archives: Public Record Office (PRO), E.210/8344.
5. For a brief history of the Harold family, see H. Owen, *Old Pembroke Families* (London, 1902), 63–4. It may be significant that the earliest mention of ‘Harroldestoun’ as a knight’s fee coincides with its grant to the Harold family in 1295. Unfortunately, no mention is made of its holder; W. Rees (ed.), *Calendar of Ancient Petitions relating to Wales* (Cardiff, 1975), 251–2; H. Owen (ed.), *A Calendar of the Public Records relating to Pembrokeshire* (3 vols, London, 1911–18), vol. 1, 42.
6. *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, VI, 336; Owen op. cit. (note 5), vol. 1, 113–4.
7. For details, see R. K. Turvey, ‘The Perrot family and their circle in south-west Wales during the later Middle Ages’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, Swansea (1988), 62–66, 515–6.
8. PRO, E.210/2502; 6295; 6593.
9. Turvey op. cit. (note 7), 65.
10. *Ibid.*, 550.
11. E. L. Barnwell, *Perrot Notes* (London, 1867), 123–6.
12. B. G. Charles (ed.), *Calendar of the Records of the Borough of Haverfordwest 1539–1660* (Cardiff, 1967), 1.
13. PRO, *Calendar of Ancient Deeds*, Series D, III, 554.
14. Owen, op. cit. (note 5), vol. 1, 32.
15. Charles op. cit. (note 12), 23.
16. R. K. Turvey, ‘A note on the date of birth of Sir John Perrot’, *National Library of Wales Journal* 30 (1994), 233–8.
17. Turvey op. cit. (note 7), 283. A full account of the dispute is currently in preparation.
18. PRO, E.118/33.
19. The following members of the Perrot family were buried ‘coram ymagine Sancti Salvatoris’ in what was evidently a family mausoleum: Thomas (d. 1474), Sir William (d. 1503), Joanna (d. 1504), Sir Owen (d. 1521), Katherine (d. c. 1524) and Thomas (d. 1531)
20. For details of the history and archaeology of the priory, see S. E. Rees, ‘The Augustinian Priory’, in D. Miles (ed.), *A History of Haverfordwest* (Llandysul, 1999), 54–78.
21. R. K. Turvey, ‘Sir John Perrot (1528–92): a fourth centenary retrospective’, *J. Pembrokeshire Hist. Soc.* 5 (1992–3), 15–31.
22. Turvey op. cit. (note 16), 30 (1994), 233–8; *idem.*, ‘Sir John Perrot and Haverfordwest’, in Miles (ed.) op. cit. (note 20), 165–6; PRO, E.150/1215/6.
23. Glamorgan Record Office, Cardiff Central Library MSS, no. 1118; Richard Fenton, *A Historical*

- Tour Through Pembrokeshire* (London, 1810), 230.
24. R. Turvey (ed.), *A Critical Edition of Sir James Perrot's 'The Life, Deedes and Death of Sir John Perrott, Knight'* (Lewiston, 2002), 19 n. 58 and n. 59. For the Nowell brothers, see *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. 41, 250–1.
 25. Turvey op. cit. (note 21), 15–31.
 26. P. C. C. Evans, 'Sir John Perrot', unpublished MA thesis, University of Wales, Cardiff (1940), 317. Sir Thomas was mayor of Haverfordwest in 1586.
 27. George Owen as quoted by Fenton op. cit. (note 22), 230.
 28. Ibid.
 29. Ibid.
 30. R. K. Turvey, 'Admiration or revulsion: interpreting the life, career and character of Sir James Perrot (1571–1637)', *J. Pembrokeshire Hist. Soc.* 11 (2002), 5–31 and 12 (2003), 44–58; P. W. Hasler (ed.), *The House of Commons, 1558–1603* (3 vols, London, 1983), vol. 3, 207–8.
 31. Charles op. cit. (note 12), 229. The sixpence worth of lead carried from 'Harreston' accounted for in September 1586 was likely a donation by Sir Thomas Perrot for the repair of St Mary's church: *ibid.*, 200
 32. Barnwell op. cit. (note 11), 179–82; PRO, E.133/8/1132.
 33. Barnwell op. cit. (note 11), 179.
 34. The sum agreed, reluctantly by Perrot, amounted to £500.
 35. E. A. Lewis and J. C. Davies (eds), *Records of the Court of Augmentations Relating to Wales and Monmouthshire* (Cardiff, 1954), 489–90.
 36. Worcestershire Record Office (WRO), Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, BA 3835/9/1(iii); Hasler op. cit. (note 29), vol. 3, 205.
 37. The original document complete with royal seal is in the Pakington archive deposited in WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, BA 3835/9/1(iii).
 38. Turvey 2002 op. cit. (note 30), 5–31.
 39. WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, BA 3835/5/5; Barnwell op. cit. (note 11), 121; for details of James and Francis Perrot see R. K. Turvey, 'NLW Roll 135: a seventeenth-century pedigree roll from Herefordshire', *National Library of Wales Journal* 30 (1998), 390–1, 402.
 40. F. Jones, 'Lloyd of Cilciffeth', *Pembrokeshire Historian* 4, 60.
 41. Last heard of in 1678, James was certainly dead by the time his brother Sir Herbert drew up his will in June 1682: Barnwell op. cit. (note 11), 214.
 42. A. L. Leach, *The History of the Civil War, 1642–49, in Pembrokeshire and on its Borders* (London, 1937), 39, 41.
 43. B. Howells (ed.), *Pembrokeshire County History, Vol. 3, Early Modern Pembrokeshire, 1536–1815* (Haverfordwest, 1987), 210.
 44. Leach, op. cit. (note 42), 129, 140.
 45. B. D. Henning (ed.), *The House of Commons, 1660–1690* (3 vols, London, 1983), vol. 3, 228–9.
 46. Jones op. cit. (note 40), 59–60; F. Green, 'The Barlows of Slebech', *West Wales Historical Records* 3 (1913), 144.
 47. Barnwell op. cit. (note 11), 214.
 48. F. Green, 'Pembrokeshire hearths in 1670', *West Wales Historical Records* 10 (1924), 187; Jones op. cit. (note 40), 51. See also N. Goose, 'How accurately do the Hearth Tax Returns reflect wealth? A discussion of some urban evidence', *Local Population Studies* 67 (2001), 44–63.
 49. WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, 482851. A transcription of and commentary on the Haroldston inventory is in preparation.

50. Henning op. cit. (note 45), vol. 3, 228–9.
51. Ibid., vol. 1, 595.
52. Fenton op. cit. (note 23), 231.
53. Haverfordwest Library, Francis Green MSS, vol. 9, 402.
54. WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, 482684.
55. H. Pakington and R. Pakington, *The Pakingtons of Westwood* (Worcester, 1975), 49.
56. Ibid., 54–7. The fact that in April 1705 Hester, together with her young son, was robbed of all her gold when travelling by coach from Haroldston to Wellington may have put her off visiting her Pembrokeshire property.
57. WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, 484060. It has been suggested that the house may have been let to friends of the Pakington family between 1708 and 1712, but the ‘day book’ cited by the writer, John Brown of Haverfordwest, has not been located: J. W. Phillips and F. J. Warren (eds), *The History of Haverfordwest with that of Some Pembrokeshire Parishes* (Haverfordwest, 1914), 173–4 (revised edition of Brown’s original work).
58. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography down to 1940* (1959), 183.
59. Fenton, op. cit. (note 23), 231. It has been suggested that Lady Betty Rich actually resided elsewhere in the parish (but still in the manor Haroldston which embraced the whole parish), at the now vanished Haylett, though there is no evidence to support this assumption: Phillips and Warren op. cit. (note 57), 172. As a note of interest, the Pakington archive hold five daily issues of the *Spectator* edited by Addison (22–26 January 1712): WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, BA 5117/3/9.
60. WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, 482859; 482581. Aubrey was expected to pay an annual rent of £50 19s.
61. WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, 482846.
62. Pakington and Pakington op. cit. (note 55), 96.
63. Pembrokeshire Record Office (Pemb. RO), Haverfordwest, D/RTP/H, 1763. Francis Jones, *Historic Houses of Pembrokeshire* (Brawdy, 1996), 80.
64. Pemb. RO, Haverfordwest, HDX/4/3.
65. Pakington and Pakington op. cit. (note 55), 100.
66. Fenton op. cit. (note 23), 226.
67. Jones op. cit. (note 63), 81.
68. *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire. VII – County of Pembroke* (London, 1925), 106.
69. Pakington and Pakington op. cit. (note 55), 54. Hailing from Little Milford, Freystrop, the Bevan or Beavan family seem to have served their landlords, the Perrots, and their successors as stewards of Haroldston for a number of years. For example, John Bevans (mistranscribed as Yevans) served as Sir Thomas Perrot’s steward during the 1580s while William Beavans is known to have served Sir John Pakington and his wife Hester between c. 1701 and 1718: Charles op. cit. (note 12), 201; WRO, Lord Hampton (Pakington) MSS, 482674, 511529.
70. P. Smith, *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* (London, 1988), 21–5, 520–1.
71. *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire. VII – County of Pembroke* (London, 1925), 106. R. C. Turner of Cadw, who surveyed the site in 1991, has speculated that the slight construction and small size of the Steward’s Tower suggests that it might have been ‘a Tudor or 17th-century banqueting house similar to examples at Edsall Castle, Brechin and Chatsworth, Derbyshire’: Cadw Scheduled Ancient Monument Record: SAM Visit Description Text, 6.
72. BL, Add. MSS, 22,720 fo. 92. The reference to building work is contained in the so-called

Haroldston Calendar, a locally produced book of hours dating from the late fifteenth century that served the Perrot family as a family Bible with pedigree entries, brief details of landed disputes, family deaths, prayers, psalms etc, ornamented throughout by rough coloured drawings. An edited and annotated transcription of the calendar, funded by a grant from the Cambrian Archaeological Association, is in preparation.

73. Could this be one of the 'new buildings' containing the three 'garrets' referred to in the inventory of 1717? Of course, 'new' need not be interpreted so literally in that they might well have been a century old but were among the newer parts of the manorial complex.
74. Phillips and Warren op. cit. (note 57), 170–1.
75. For details, see C. Thacker, *The History of Gardens* (Beckenham, 1979) and R. Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England* (London, 1979).
76. The gatehouse is referred to as the main entrance to the manorial complex via the sunken road in the deed of sale in 1763: Pemb. RO, Haverfordwest, D/RTP/H.
77. Fenton, op. cit. (note 23), 230.
78. George Owen, *The Description of Pembrokeshire* ed. D. Miles (Llandysul, 1994), 150–1.
79. J. Tombs, 'Notes on the Cockpit, Haroldston', *Archaeol. Cambrensis* 3rd ser., 10 (1864), 179.
80. Pakington and Pakington op. cit. (note 55), 54.
81. E. Whittle, *The Historic Gardens of Wales* (Cardiff, 1992), 13–21.
82. At Landshipping a major garden of the very end of the seventeenth century can be traced complete with complex terraces, and where a water folly was being built in 1696. Only earthworks remain at Henllan.
83. S. E. Rees, 'The secret garden. The discovery of a medieval garden at Haverfordwest Priory', *Heritage in Wales* 6 (Winter, 1996), Cadw Welsh Historic Monuments; Rees op. cit. (note 20), 55–78.

•